

# Hillandale

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Journal of the  
City of London  
Phonograph and  
Gramophone Society

THE HILLANDALE NEWS

JUNE 1982 No. 126

ISSN-0018-1846

THE OLD WAY

THE PYRAMID WAY

USE

**GOLDEN PYRAMID**

REGISTERED  
GRAMOPHONE NEEDLES  
THE WORLD'S FINEST NEEDLES

Delivers one needle at a time

No Spilling.  
No Sharp Lids.  
No Rust.  
Four Tones.  
A British Production

9d  
PER PYRAMID  
200 NEEDLES

THE BRITISH NEEDLE CO. LTD., ARGOSY WORKS, REDDITCH, ENGLAND

WHAT EVERY SOUND-WAVER WANTS.

200 DISC Needles

Design on box as above (in colours)

ALLWOOD'S  
"MINERVA"  
HIGH - GRADE  
TALKING MACHINE  
NEEDLES  
FOR  
NEEDLE-CUT DISCS.

100 DISC Needles

TradeMark

Minerva

Design on box as above (in colours)

LOUD TONE  
"POLYTON"  
(PATENT)  
And all other kinds.

NOVELTY.  
ALLWOOD'S  
"MINERVA"  
"PHONOSTYLES"  
FOR  
PHONO-CUT DISCS.  
BETTER THAN SAPPHIRES  
PLAIN, LOUD TONE,  
Sixpence per 100.  
"TARGET" Triple-Tone.  
One Shilling per 100

*\*From all Dealers, or Wholesale only*

**Wm. ALLWOOD & SONS, LIMITED,**  
Note address—Minerva Works, ALCESTER. Estd. 1796.

TWO NEEDLE ADVERTISEMENTS: MAY 1929 (Left) and MAY 1911



By Appointment to  
H.M. The Queen



By Appointment to  
H.M. Queen Alexandra

Registered

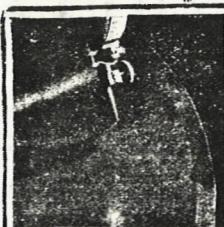
Trade Mark

## Only the Best Gramophone Needles should be used

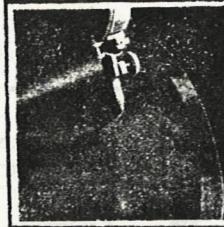
Faulty needles, or those of inferior quality, not only give a poor reproduction, but may ruin the best record in a single playing.

There is only one certain method of obtaining reliable reproducing points—insist on being supplied with "His Master's Voice" Needles, which will give the finest reproduction with the minimum of wear on the record.

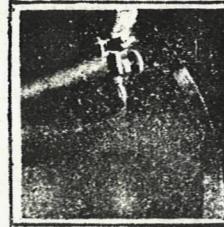
The retail prices of "His Master's Voice" Needles are 9d. per packet of 200 Steel Needles, 6d. per packet of 4 "Tungstyle" Needles, 3/- per box of 100 Fibre Needles. The price of the new Circular Needle Container (with compartments for Full Tone, Half Tone, Soft Tone, and used Needles) is 3/-.



STEEL



FIBRE



"TUNGSTYLE"

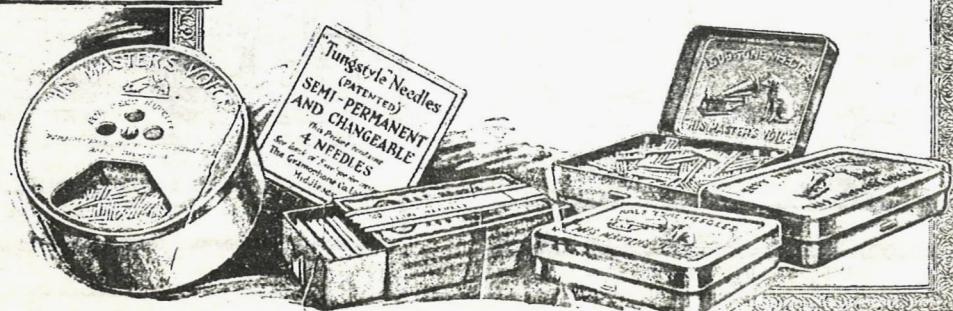
To attain perfect reproduction always play "His Master's Voice" Records on "His Master's Voice" Instruments.

### "His Master's Voice"

The Gramophone Co., Ltd., have extended their generous easy payment system to apply to all models that are manufactured under their well-known trade mark.

"His Master's Voice" products can be obtained only from The Gramophone Company's accredited dealers. Write for name of nearest dealer in your locality.

THE GRAMOPHONE COMPANY, LTD.  
363 - 367 OXFORD STREET, LONDON. W. 1.



# Edchat

Readers may be struck by the large proportion of the present issue taken up by Members' correspondence. I cannot feel but that it is a healthy sign for a magazine such as this to provoke such letters from its readers, and I hope that the views expressed in them will in turn prove interesting to other members and prompt them to write to the Editor, too. Of course, the Editor does not always agree with what is said, and often makes his own views clear, or rather tries to, but that is no reason for anyone to shirk from writing.

Not all the material available gets into an issue, of course, and indeed there are still one or two letters, as well as articles, which I had hoped to put in this number which are still outstanding as I write, with the magazine almost complete. One of these is from that doyenne of needle-tin collectors, Ruth Lambert, asking for information on needle tins for a book she is compiling on the subject. I have for some months past been intending to put a few old needle advertisements in the Magazine, and this has prompted me to start the ball rolling by including as many as I can this time. All are being reproduced from photostats in my collection, and some of them are rather pale, which means they may not reproduce well, and for this I apologise. However, very little work seems to have been done on the subject (dating the various design changes in the HMV tins, for example), and I hope that the appearance of these advertisements will prompt others into digging out more information. There is considerable scope for research; into the actual makers of the tins, for example, as well as the needles (more often than not different from the name appearing on the lid, I fancy). Our Frontispiece shows an April 1924 view of the short-lived HMV aluminium tins; these were clearly standard snuff-tins with purpose-made lids, for on the bottom is a corrugated section for striking matches. This seems to have been a common feature of snuff tins, presumably on the assumption that snuff-takers were also smokers. Another type of snuff-tin was curved, to fit in a waistcoat pocket, and even these were used for needles at one time, by Dulcetto.

Anyone with information on the subject of needle tins is invited to write to Ruth Lambert at [REDACTED] Oldbury, Warley, West Midlands.

Another item destined for this issue but held over for lack of space is another of Mike Field's excellent 'Technical Forum' pieces, this time on the subject of horn restoration. He deals specifically with painted metal horns, but this might be an opportune moment to mention a product called BIOX which I came across in a local ironmonger's, and which proved excellent for removing verdigris from a much-decayed brass horn. Unlike most corrosion-removers, it does not corrode your skin, and can be applied with the hand (it is a liquid gel).

Finally, following my article on portable Grafonolas, Chris Hamilton has written of two models I omitted. One is the 220, an early 1930s updated 113a, with chromium plating, 10-inch turntable, Plano-Reflex tone-arm and 15a soundbox. The other is the 206, another HMV 102 derivative, without the back-to-front winder clip and dating, I suspect, from the early 1950s. It appears to parallel the late 102 (e and h) with flush motor-board. Any further additions to the story would be welcome.

# THE GRAMOPHONE GOES EAST

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REPORT OF A TALK GIVEN BY LEONARD PETTS TO THE SOCIETY ON NOVEMBER 17TH 1981.

This talk was a continuation of Leonard's previous lecture on the birth of the Red Label Celebrity series of Gramophone Company records. Most of the characters in this story have already been mentioned in the Red Label talk: W. B. Owen (Managing Director), Fred and Will Gaisberg (trained by Emil Berliner) and Thomas Addis (General Manager). Jack Watson Horde had been with the Company from the start and was the link-man between the Company and their overseas interests such as the Hanover pressing plant.

Horde had established an office of the Company in Calcutta in 1901, but there are very few papers extant which give any clues as to the Management's thoughts at the time. There was some discussion at a Board Meeting in February 1902 on the India project. Letters from Owen speak of extensive proposed recording projects in India and China, and the various legal obstacles which might be encountered. Horde was expressing his hopes of big business in China and Japan. He also pointed out the great size of the country and the difficulty of obtaining reliable helpers.

Owen wrote in the summer of 1902 that a new man was to be sent to Calcutta along with Fred Gaisberg and enough equipment for six months' work. The 'new man' was to be Addis. Gaisberg and Bedford Royal had developed a new weight-driven recording machine for the trip. Horde resented being told by the Company that he was to do whatever Addis wanted, as he considered he knew far more of local conditions than Addis.

On the day of their departure, they loaded 600 wax blanks with the equipment at Tilbury at the end of September. Addis and Gaisberg wrote of their excitement at the undertaking. Addis had brought some records and gave concerts on board during the voyage. One of the lists of records for the concerts still survives.

Addis' job was to spy out the land and appoint suitable agents for the business and to arrange supplies of gramophones, records and needles to various centres. At Calcutta it took three days to unload the thirty large packing cases and get them through the customs. Horde had arranged a location and engaged artistes, but it was found that the local English who had been appointed agents and factors were just not interested in Indian music. However, the local police proved very helpful in inducing Fred Gaisberg to likely places of entertainment to secure singers and her artistes.

Here we heard a record of the Corinthian Theatre's version of the Merchant of Venice. These local companies used to incorporate popular songs in their productions of Shakespeare! Then we heard an Indian version of My Love is Like a Red, Red Rose.

On one day they made thirty records of the Classic Theatre Orchestra. These orchestras played in unison - apparently harmonies were unknown there. However, Horde was very disgruntled with the slow progress of the recording trip and wrote to Headquarters, complaining. Addis wrote also, saying how nicely the project was going, making about 600 records in India and Ceylon. He decided it would not be worth going to Burma.

By December enough records had been made and the party started out for Japan. The records made in India amounted to 216 seven-inch and 336 ten-inch. There was mounting tension between Horde and Addis; each was writing to Headquarters complaining of shortcomings in the other. Also many records, shipped out to India from Europe, had been inadequately packed and were arriving warped and often unusable.

Owen wrote to Addis in Yokohama suggesting that in future he make two small records to one large, as it appeared the business would flourish more with the smaller disc. He was also asked to make sure the weekly accounts were forwarded regularly. Horde had written to Owen complaining of the reckless way money had been squandered on the Indian trip.

The recording party reached Yokohama on January 16th 1903 and they received a very cold welcome. In addition, it was the rainy season. Addis found, as in India, that the local populace was not to be hurried. Fred Gaisberg received a cable that his father was dangerously ill, and two days later that he had died.

The Japanese recordings were started in February and fifty-four records were made at the first session. (Here we heard a ladies' band playing the Japanese national anthem.) After four weeks' work the party moved to Tokyo, where they encountered an Englishman who helped them find artistes and arrange programmes. The apparatus was set up in a European hotel and auditions were held. (Here we heard a male singer with chorus, on a record made at one of these sessions.)

Many of the musicians were blind and played on a variety of traditional instruments. A record of a type of banjo sounded well. In a letter to Owen on March 6th, Addis commented on the high fees required by the artistes. There was a band kept for performing exclusively for the Mikado and Addis sought permission to record it. This was eventually granted, but a delay was caused by the death of a relation of the Mikado. Eventually, at the end of February, ten really good records were made. In all about 270 records were made.

An unexpected offshoot came from this Japanese expedition. Alfred Michaelis in Milan wrote to Owen saying that Giacomo Puccini was writing a Japanese opera and would like to have copies of Japanese records. This showed the great benefit that the Gramophone could be to composers, and indeed many others. Umberto Giordano made similar use of Russian recordings when composing his opera *Siberia*.

Horde and Addis had ceased communicating with each other. Owen asked Gaisberg to return to London, saying that Darby and Hamp had covered South Africa and

were now proceeding to Persia. However, there is no record of any recording trips to Africa at this period and Hamp certainly did not go to Teheran as stated.

On March 12th 1903 Horde wrote to London asking when delivery of the Indian records could be expected. The records, 100 copies of each, were shipped on March 26th and further supplies were promised on each ship.

Towards the end of March the expedition reached Shanghai and started recording, but the music was so noisy (with drums, gongs etc.) that after only ten records on the first day the engineers wanted a rest. By March 26th 330 records had been made. Departure for Hong Kong was then decided upon and work was to start in mid April. There were to be about 120 records to be made in the Cantonese dialect.

Addis wrote to Owen complaining of the Chinese slowness, but saying that some artistes would be coming from Canton itself. Most of them were young girls and Fred Gaisberg incurred the wrath of the Chinese for touching one girl, only in his efforts to get her the right distance from the recording horn.

In Hong Kong they found it difficult to obtain the right artistes, so others were brought in from Canton. From here the party was to go to Singapore, Bangkok and Rangoon. Addis wrote home that the trip had gone very well and that "Gaisberg works like a Trojan". Here we saw some examples of pressings made from this first Indian recording trip.

Addis wrote to London that he had secured the services of a Malay to help with their work in Singapore during May. Towards the end of the month Addis wrote that they had secured 120 Malay and ninety-five Javanese records. In all, the grand total of Far Eastern records was 1762. Owen believed that the foundations of a very large trade in the Far East had been laid. The cost of the whole expedition was £2,529-14-5d.

On the return to London, Watson Horde resigned. Addis also quickly relinquished his post; he was dismissed by a new Director in September 1905, and left the Company altogether in December of the same year.

London Reporter.

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Rednal, Birmingham  
8th April 1982

Dear Christopher,

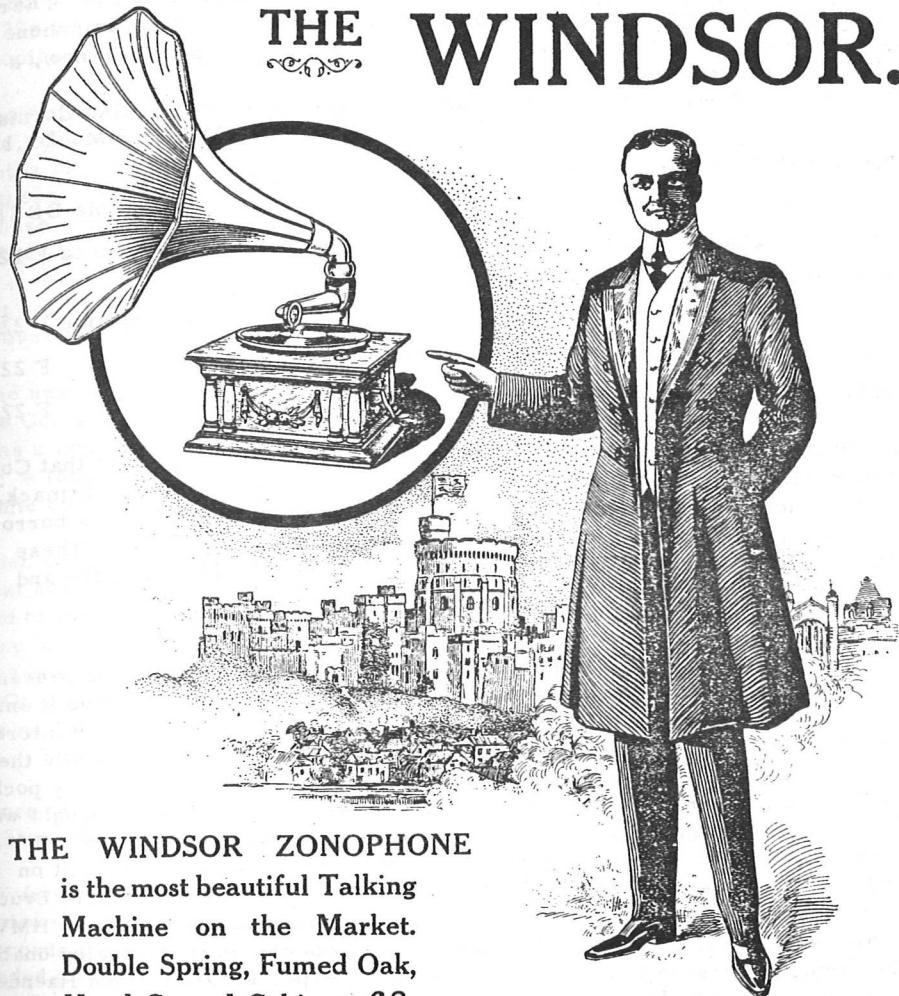
Ronald Dethleffson, of California, has just informed me of the death of the former Edison recording artist Aileen Stanley. She died on March 24th, aged 89. I am not too sure of her recording career, but she made records for Edison in the 1920s.

Best Wishes,

---

John S. Dales.

# THE SUMMER SELLER— THE WINDSOR.



## THE WINDSOR ZONOPHONE

is the most beautiful Talking  
Machine on the Market.  
Double Spring, Fumed Oak,  
Hand Carved Cabinet, £8.

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ALL ZONO FACTORS HAVE "WINDSORS"  
IN STOCK.

I was brought up in Inverness, the capital of The Highlands. It was in this environment that I began my love affair with the gramophone and its records. Early in the 1950s, before I had reached my 'teens, I was given a portable gramophone and six records by my parents, one Christmas. The gramophone was brand new, a Columbia Model 211z, and the records were:

The Garden Where the Praties Grow / The Harp that Once... (McCormack)  
HMV DA 1171

Blaze Away / Colonel Bogey (Grenadier Guards, cond. Miller)  
Columbia DB 1885

Trains (Reginald Gardiner) Decca F 5278

Begin the Beguine / Daybreak (Roberto Inglez and Orch.)  
Parlophone F 2209

Shoemaker's Serenade - Samba / And Mimi Beguine (Inglez) " F 2269

Whispering / The Wishing Waltz (Oscar Rabin and Orch.) " F 2284

I had many hours of pleasure listening to those over and over again on that Columbia. Fortunately all these records survive to this day except the McCormack, and this I have since replaced with another copy. With the help of records borrowed from my parents' collection I was able to broaden my musical horizons. These ranged from the light classical, through the stage shows of the 1920s, 1930s and 1940s to the popular tunes of the same period.

My parents had been given an HMV Automatic Radiogram for a wedding present and this was still functioning when I was a youngster. They decided to keep it until it was no longer serviceable. As a result of this policy I missed out on the microgroove revolution which was sweeping the homes of my school friends. While they were buying or being given the latest pop records I bought the odd 78 when my pocket allowed, almost until their demise. One of the first classical records I bought was that superb version of Mozart's Horn Concerto No. 3 in E flat (K447) played by Aubrey Brain and the BBC Symphony Orchestra conducted by Sir Adrian Boult on HMV DB 3973/4. Another was the Violin Concerto No. 1 in G Minor by Max Bruch. I had heard a very short snippet from it on Cavalcade from Famous Artistes on HMV DB 2455, which was in my parents' collection. I was hooked on it, but being unable to afford the Menuhin version I had to settle for the cheaper version by Ida Haendel and the Philharmonia conducted by Kubelik. However I enjoyed that version and still occasionally play it.

By the time I had reached university my parents' old HMV had given up the ghost and they had had to replace it. A new HMV radiogram with VHF and Stereo capability appeared in its place. The temptation was too much and I deserted the 78 for the microgroove and joined my friends! With the first money I earned from a holiday job I bought my own portable microgroove record player. I was launched on the

1. p. bandwagon.

However, by the time I started work in Glasgow in 1961 my interest in 78s was rekindled. I had been walking along Dumbarton Road and had found the Gramophone Shop run by the Melvin Brothers. This was Mecca! I had never seen so many 78s. I bought one or two of the HMV Irish McCormack series - they had several copies of many, all new.

About this time I began to long for a wind-up gramophone again. My parents had retired, moved to a smaller house and cleared out many possessions, including the Columbia 211z and many of my and their 78s. Some I managed to rescue and I hung on to these like grim death. I resolved to buy a gramophone as soon as I had my own house with room to keep it. Around 1969 I returned to Glasgow after a short spell back in Inverness, and bought an old tenement flat with large rooms. Passing a bric-a-brac shop, I saw displayed in the window an HMV Model 157. It was in excellent condition, and after some haggling I bought it for 7 guineas. My records came over very well on it and it is still playing them with the same quality.

The next machine I bought was a Hines table grand. Made by the Scottish Gramophone Co. of Glasgow, it was similar in style to the HMV Model 9. Its Hines sound box was a copy of the Exhibition, but there were two extra controls on the motor board; a tone control with settings for speech, solo instruments and orchestra, and a volume control.

Then came what was to me an unusual model. I visited a junk shop of which I had just heard for the first time, and asked about gramophones, at which I was pointed to the dark nether regions of the shop, where I found a large cabinet about the size of a domestic chest freezer. It had an HMV label inside the lid, but the layout was quite unfamiliar to me. I bought it for £10 plus £2 for carriage back to my flat. Once it was home, I started to dismantle it and found it had an electric motor. With a new flex fitted, I switched on and it worked. It was an HMV Model 1 Automatic. To date I have found only one other example in Scotland.

Since those days I have moved to Cupar in Fife and my collecting has continued. I bought my first phonograph here, a Pathé Coq, with 30 cylinders (10 of them Salon).

My first Edison Diamond Disc machine was also found locally. I answered an advertisement in the local paper for two gramophones and records, and was told the records were of the biscuit type! I called as soon as possible after work and soon concluded a deal. About 70 records were included, among them a Bonci and a Maggie Teyte, and one of the machines, which was in pieces, I sold to a dealer. On the record side, I have had a few good finds. In Glasgow I found Maurice Chevalier's first record, "On the Level, You're a Little Devil", in a Lot bought for £2 at auction. I have also picked up a Kreisler G and T and two Odeon McCormacks at auction, at a few pence each after adding in the cost of the other records in the two lots.

I hope I have offered hope to other collectors. Even here we can still strike lucky.

Chris Hamilton

A letter from John Fesler of Illinois relates how comparatively simple it is to 'improve' the sound from an Edison Diamond Disc phonograph in a way that may not have readily occurred to all members. He starts with an A-250 motor - the one that was mounted in the Amberola 1 type cabinet, but any similar motor will do - and extends the horn exponentially to reinforce the low frequencies. This is done by using hardboard or similar sheet material, opening to a  $4\frac{1}{2}$  ft. square mouth held rigid by diagonal bracing wires, and resting on two feet on the floor. The tapered end is connected to the Edison horn mouth by a cloth coupling which must be air-tight, yet flexible enough to allow the horn to swivel normally. Turning to the reproducer, an Edison can be altered to have a compression spring carefully added to the silk link between stylus bar and diaphragm and between the weight and reproducer body at the hinge-block end. Too much spring will naturally cause extra record wear, but these suggestions will act as guide to someone wanting to experiment with the Edison. We hasten to add that "The Management is not responsible for damage or loss....."

News of an earlier conversion job comes through the kindness of V. K. Chew, who reports an early Edison electric machine - probably a Model M as its patents list runs up to June 30th 1893 - on a substantial five-drawer chest, and with an oblong plate-glass cover; this has been converted to play disc records, no less. The top casting, mandrel, carrier-arm section has been discarded and a 9-inch gramophone turntable substituted on a new base formed to fit the lugs cast in the phonograph bedplate which originally held the top casting. A belt from the usual pulley on the electric motor spindle drives the turntable shaft. There is an accompanying goose-neck tone-arm of unstated provenance fitted through the wooden deck into the chest, but the illustration does not disclose the form or position of the horn. While there are those today who might get warmed up over such a mutilation, it was probably considered a step forward in its time, when cylinders were becoming difficult to buy and perhaps its owner favoured the wider choice of discs. It just seems a pity that this should have happened on such an elegant instrument.

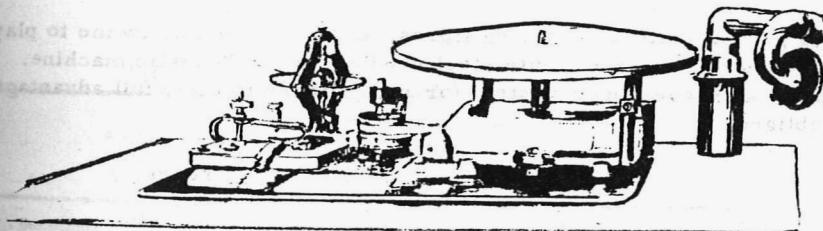
The New York Times of April 11th carried an authoritative article by Harold C. Schoenberg on the Mapleson cylinders. Readers of The Gramophone thirty years ago or so will remember Schoenberg as a regular American contributor. Once again it looks as if the Mapleson cylinders may appear shortly in a new tape form, using the latest methods of transcription. These are being engineered by the Rodgers and Hammerstein archives of Recorded Sound at Lincoln Center, and are expected to be ready for May for interested researchers. Members will recall that commercial transfers appeared in the thirties on 10-inch discs, and in the fifties on two long-playing records. The present results are said to be better than the earlier efforts, but there is no way of repairing any of the patches of excessive wear. They do however contain snatches of artists like Jean de Reszke, who was the greatest draw before Caruso, and Emilio de Marchi, neither of whom seemed to have had a commercial record issued. While some sort of general availability is expected to be ready to coincide with the Metropolitan Opera's 100th birthday in 1983, it is not yet

known if there are legal barriers, but if issued such a record or records will be sold at "a handsome profit", so be warned!

Another who has transferred some cylinders to modern disc is Ray Grieve - [REDACTED], Lilyfield, N.S.W. 2040, Australia - in this case recordings made by his grandfather William Grieve, during a Christmas party in 1912. These were made at Croydon, N.S.W. on an un-named Edison machine, and feature a collection of children's songs. The sound has been transferred to a 7-inch disc, using an electrical pick-up, and although we have not heard it, there is apparently some surface deterioration in the originals, but every effort has been made to filter and liven up the sound by Peter Burgis at the Sound Archives of the National Library in Canberra. The songs include 'Bush Flowers', an Australian composition previously unknown to folklorists, and there is also a tin-whistle tune. The recorded material totals six minutes. A few copies remain at \$7.50 Aust., plus airmail postage at \$2.00 Aust., with a discount for quantity. Enquiries should be made to Ray Grieve.



This sketch shows the converted  
EDISON ELECTRIC PHONOGRAPH  
referred to on the previous page,  
with a general view of the cabinet  
on the left, and a close-up of the  
modified upper mechanism below.



# Correspondence

Glasgow  
April 18 1982

Dear Sir,

To begin, I must say that this letter will interest some members and infuriate others, but it is purely a statement of my own findings. I have tried, in the past, some of the H. M. V. triangular fibre needles (using No. 4 and No. 5a sound-boxes designed for them) with little success. So, when I ordered a packet of fibres from Phonoparts I was hoping for an improvement. However, after testing these I have come to similar conclusions.

Before I come to these, I might as well say that the records I used for my tests were all in mint condition and no dirt was embedded in the grooves. The sound-boxes were the H. M. V. No. 4 and 5a and the Columbia No. 9. The first I designed for fibres and the latter I specifically made to track the velocities encountered in electrical recordings, all these in their correct, well-designed arms.

The tone of the needles is, of course, much softer than that obtained with steel types. However, my enjoyment was not impaired by this but by the rate at which the fibres wore out. Even on orchestral records made in the early 1930s, signs of wear became obvious (in some cases) after only a minute or so. Excessive deterioration was noted on the inner grooves, even with arms designed for (fairly) low tracking error. Altering the angle of entry made little or no difference. Even at the best of times there was no 'attack', brass instruments sounded faint and strained. In short, it was a relief to return to steel needles, even though these are far less than perfect.

In passing I might add that I mostly play my records electrically, using a Garrard 301, SME 3009 and Shure M95, with filtering, proper response correction etc.

I had hoped for good results when trying fibres, as these would allow me to play many records which I would not risk, with steel needles, on an acoustic machine. If someone can help me by suggesting a system for using fibres to their full advantage, would be much obliged.

Yours,

John E. Cavanagh.



#### SONGSTER.

A superior loud tone Needle,  
English manufacture.

Price per 1,000



#### SCOUT.

A loud tone Needle, best  
quality.

English manufacture.

Price per 1,000



#### GINTERCO.

A loud tone Needle, best  
quality.

English manufacture.

Price per 1,000



#### TANGO.

Box of five different illustrated tins in attractive  
colours. A loud tone Needle,  
best quality.

Price per 1,000



#### ENGLAPHONE.

Another loud tone Needle,  
best quality English manu-  
facture.

Price per 1,000



#### HIS FAVOURITE SONG.

A good reliable loud tone  
Needle. German make.

Price per 1,000



#### HEROLD.

Reliable loud tone Needle of  
German make.

Price per 1,000

ABOVE, a page from a wholesale catalogue of the early 1920s.  
BELOW, an advertisement of May, 1927.

1/- per packet  
of 100  
(Postage 1½d.)

## Fairytone Scratchless Needles

Each needle plays both sides of a 12-inch record **Safely.**

Sheffield  
Steel  
Gold plated

FREDERIC JACKSON & CO., 58a, St. Thomas's Street, Portsmouth.  
(MANUFACTURERS OF THE "JUSSRITE" RECORD FILING SYSTEM.)

Dear Sir,

Following the letters from Messrs. Field and Hopkinson (Hillandale, February) concerning the preservation of recorded sound, perhaps I may be permitted to comment. I am a producer, working in BBC Local Radio (BBC Radio Medway at Chatham). Although I am based in the newsroom I have, in my spare time, prepared a number of documentary programmes on subjects which interest me. My latest project is a series of half-hour programmes tracing the history of sound recording from Edison's tinfoil to modern stereo techniques.

An important part of the programmes will be the use of recorded material on contemporary machines. While l.p. discs and magnetic tape can be replayed on studio equipment, these illustrations represent only a small part of the story. Everything else from the 1880s to the early 1950s has had to be recorded in situ. With the need to record something like three dozen separate items, the physical problem of shipping the appropriate machines and their respective protective owners into a 'dead room' studio does not bear thinking about.

For everything from a Dog Model to an Expert, I have used a BBC standard issue Uher Report 4000IC portable reel-to-reel tape recorder, with a Beyer Dynamic M550LM microphone, supported on a variety of standard BBC studio microphone stands. All the tapes were made at the standard broadcast speed of  $7\frac{1}{2}$  inches per second. The recordings were made in fairly average 'living room' conditions, with the usual complement of curtains, carpets and furniture. After ten years in the broadcasting business, I reckon I am a reasonable judge of tape recording quality, and I am very satisfied with the quality of my recordings.

Listeners in the BBC Radio Medway reception area will be able to judge for themselves when the programmes are broadcast later this year. The knack of getting the best from machines - and here I have been guided by those who know their recordings and their machines - is the careful selection of disc or cylinder, and in the case of lateral cut discs, the choice of needle is also important.

Yours faithfully,

Colin Johnson

P.S. For readers who remember my article 'Cadet Capers' (Hillandale August 1981), the machine is now fully restored, complete with a Columbia no. 15a sound-box.

Capetown  
South Africa

1 March 1932

Dear Sir,

On reading Mike Field's article on the preparation of transfers (February Hill-andale) I could not help being struck by the complexity and expense of a procedure which, in the palmy days of the 1920s, would be taken in his stride by any amateur photographer who did his own developing and printing - and, believe it or not, many of them did; and without denting their single-figure pay-packets.

This feat was accomplished by the use of Kodak Transferotype bromide paper, which cost slightly more than ordinary bromide paper, and was used in the same way. The negative was placed, reversed, with a sheet of paper, in a Printing Frame. For the benefit of late-comers, this useful device had a glass to support the film negative, and a removable back held in place with flat springs (obviating the use of foam rubber and weights.) Still obtainable from antique dealers at moderate cost. It was then printed by electric, gas or humble candle light (no investment in ultra-violet light sources which are of no use for any other purpose), developed with MQ or other simple developer (no costly potions required), fixed and washed. Then the print was adjusted on the object (no instant, irrevocable adhesion), pressed down, and transferred by the use of hot water. Just like the transfers with which we used to embellish our school books, "warranted to come off."

Transferotype paper has long been off the market, and I know not whether anything similar is now obtainable. It is no use consulting a photographic dealer. He will sell you armfuls of intricate apparatus from Japan with which to confound the Jones's, but if you ask for an elementary item such as a jar of mounting paste or a pound - sorry, 453.5 grams - of hypo, you will be met with a blank look of incomprehension and withering scorn.

I hope Mr. Field will not be offended by any apparent levity in the above, but we whose tentacles reach back into the distant past are sometimes apt to be cynical about modern developments. The late Pontius Pilate asked, "What is truth?" We may well enquire, "What is progress?"

Yours sincerely,

Miss Elspeth Read.

What indeed? - Ed.

Plymouth  
24th April 1982

Dear Editor,

I have been much interested in the suggestion by Mr. J. A. McCleery for the compilation of a library of the contemporary sound of the acoustic machine. May I suggest, though, that this is a simplistic approach to the problem - a them I developed in my paper "The Technical and Subjective Replication of Archival Sound" that I gave at North Carolina State University last April (1981).

The problem that arises is whether in playing a cylinder acoustically, it should be on a Gem as the machine in most common use and therefore in the listening experience of most people of the time, or should it be played on an Idelia, the choice of a small contemporary elite minority. Further, no matter how well preserved and restored cylinders, discs and machines may be, it is unlikely that, seventy years and more on, they can give a performance on a par with that at the time of their manufacture - a point confirmed, by the way, by a member of the Edison family.

In my view, therefore, to play recorded material acoustically, as it was originally heard, is to pursue a myth of actuality. I must admit, too, that I have no wish to risk playing my one and only near-mint Caruso Blue Zonophone on a 1902 Gramophone for the doubtful pleasure of hearing how it may have sounded to my great grandfather. An electrical drive and replay system with a stylus playing directly in a groove is the only way to avoid a multiplicity of room resonances.

Can I also at this time seek the advice of enthusiasts about the speed of Edison cylinders. In John Fesler's excellent article on "Accurate Speed Adjustment" in the April issue, speeds of 125, 144 and 160 r.p.m. are quoted. Edison Triumph machines I have seen, though, have indicated speeds of 120, 144 and 160. Which should it be? At what speed should my Edison Concert cylinder No. 5021, "God Save the Queen" (amended in ink to "King") turn? And who knows the speed of the pink Lamberts?

Sincerely,  
Joe Pengelly

Oh dear, what red herrings are being drawn across Jim McCleery's trail! As I said in answer to a previous correspondent, the idea is not to worry about how old records should be played, but to demonstrate the best results of specific machines. If a Gem sounds different from an Idelia, then let both be recorded (an Idelia, of course, sounds the same as any other Edison machine with the same horn and reproducer). There is no need to spoil your lovely Blue Zonophones; any record of the right period and in good condition will just as well demonstrate the capabilities of the machine. By all means have electric motors if you are too lazy to wind up a spring, and play your records electrically if you like that sort of thing, but, please, if some of us would like to hear some acoustic machines performing at their best, do we have to be attacked as if we had suggested desecrating Menlo Park? - Ed.

Neasden  
16.4.1982

Dear Editor,

In reply to John Cavanagh's letter in Hillandale No. 125 on UNISON RECORDS, this make was not alone in bearing catalogue and matrix numbers similar to those of the producing company's own labelled discs.

The 10-inch BOB RECORD was sold by another company, although it bore the same catalogue and matrix number of the Invicta Record Co. Ltd.'s own INVICTA RECORDS. Likewise, the ROBEYPHONE RECORD- THREE SPIRES BRAND was sold with the same numbers as Fonotipia Ltd.'s JUMBO RECORD. So were the CURRY ELECTRICAL RECORDS, which used the PICCADILLY catalogue numbers, and HEART RECORDS, which used DACAPO numbers.

On the subject of listings, a VICTORY list is being compiled by Arthur Badrock (2a Dickinson Square, Croxley Green, Rickmansworth, Herts). He wishes to know what collectors have in their collections, as it is known that items were issued under particular catalogue numbers and particular artist credits which were, in fact, performed by different artists during the catalogue life of the records, and these variations need to be identified wherever possible.

Yours sincerely,

Frank Andrews.

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St Andrews  
Fife

Dear Editor,

I should like to make some comments on the recent (April) issue of Hillandale News.

1) My article '£1,000 plain, £1,000 Uncoloured' contains two slips 'twixt cup (my typescript) and lip (the final magazine). One is minor ('whispy' instead of 'wispy'), but the other introduces a complication which may have puzzled readers: in the middle paragraph of Page 5, mention is made of the intersection of an outward moving spherical wave-front with a plane as an 'ever-decreasing circle' - this should of course read 'ever increasing'.

2) The introduction of the readers to the strange delights of word-processors via the problems of the back page layout makes me wonder why such a thing was tried at all. Was it to see if the whole magazine could be typed that way? Certainly the use of computers generally is rather like cooking: a large well-planned meal for several

people seems a worthwhile achievement, whereas cooking for one seems hardly worth the bother as there are just as many pans to wash up!

(But just think - word processors will one day be collectable.....)

3) My reaction to the new cover design was, quite frankly, UGH. The old design, though not necessarily a structure worthy of a Basil Spence, was quite innocuous and pleasant enough; but the new one is more in line with Basil Fawlty - it has the disastrous hallmarks of an amateur (in its derogatory sense); the final 'e' is particularly nauseous. The general design and layout of the magazine has made slow but good progress over the years (obviously due to expenditure of time and effort on the part of the publishers); the new cover heading really takes the whole affair back several paces, in my opinion.

I write this without any knowledge of who the artist was, and I am sorry if these remarks offend anyone - but I feel that someone has dropped an aesthetic clanger. (some 'real' magazines, such as PUNCH, have done the same, I may say!)

Yours sincerely,

Peter Adamson.

++++ On Paragraph 1 of the above, mea culpa; it just shows what happens if you confront us dyed-in-the-wool fibre-needle merchants with modern technology!

On 2, our questioner provides his own answer; the back cover was thought worth the trouble of word-processing partly because, as part of the cover, something smarter than my typescript seemed desirable, and partly because it is a non-moveable feast, so to speak. Once typed, it remains unchanged for issue after issue until subscription rates change or a regional secretary resigns, or whatever. With the text filed on a word-processor's floppy disc, it will be a matter of a minute or two to feed in such alterations as they occur and have a new page typed out, with any necessary adjustments in spacing made automatically.

On 3, the new title was designed by a professional graphic artist, who gave his services to the Society gratis. The printers unfortunately arranged the whole page off-centre, but that was not the artist's fault. The lettering was designed in accordance with the Editor's requirement for an 'open' form which would avoid the shabby appearance which we sometimes got with the old solid lettering when the printing made it look like a photostat (as in the February issue). If you do not like it, why not provide an alternative? It is only two years before a new volume starts, and we can, if so desired, change the title design again. - ED.

## THE FEBRUARY MEETING

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Peter Martland's title was "The Gramophone and the First World War" and his talk looked at the progress of the war, the various moods it evoked at home, the songs it inspired and the activities of the record companies as a consequence as well as, conversely, some of the propaganda and other influences which records had on people at home.

Among the first records played was Asquith's speech on "The Causes of the War", read by the actor Arthur Bourchier. Then a popular record "Arrival of the British Troops in France" (Regal) and "Divine Service in Camp". Royalties on some records were donated to the Prince of Wales' Fund in aid of those distressed as a result of the War.

Supplies of records and machines which had previously come largely from Germany now had to be home-produced and the industry soon realised the great propaganda and morale-boosting values of the gramophone. Popular songs and comic revues perhaps separated the general public from the dreadful realities of the War. Typical songs were "Pack up your Troubles" and "Tipperary" (here sung by Stanley Kirkby) and an example of a comic sketch which made the Germans out to be complete fools (Billy Whitlock and Charlie Penrose). Propaganda records included "The Wreck of a Troopship" and part of Elgar's "Starlight Express".

Comic revues continued in 1916 ("Oh, it's a Lovely War"), but with the Battle of Jutland people began to realise the serious nature of the situation. Men were not coming back and people at home anxiously awaited news. The record played here was "Have you News of my Boy Jack?" (words by Rudyard Kipling), sung by Clara Butt and, incidentally, one of Beecham's first records. The feeling of despair deepened. Lloyd George became Prime Minister and was determined in organising the war effort and winning and this was reflected in the issues of records - for example, "Till the Boys Come Home" (sung by Stanley Kirkby) and "There's a Long, Long Trail A-Winding" (Ernest Pike).

Prohibitive taxes were imposed on imported goods in 1917, and an even greater effort had to be made in home-produced gramophones and records. The London Revues were very popular. Here we heard "A Conscientious Objector" from the revue "Round the Map" and a song from Nat D. Ayer's "Bing Boys", "Let the Great Big World Keep Turning". Near the end of the War, Fred Gaisberg was sent to France, and we heard his recording of the Royal Garrison Artillery at Lille in 1918. Post-war recordings included one of the electrical records made at the Burial of the Unknown Soldier in 1920, an anti-war song of 1927 based on Airlie Dix's "The Trumpeter" and a Columbia record of a speech by the Prince of Wales at the 1933 Festival of Remembrance.

Many thanks to Peter for a well-researched and interesting talk, which was his first for the Society and not, we hope, his last.

London Reporter.

## The March Meeting

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The evening was devoted to a talk by Barry Raynaud on Modern Recording Studio Techniques. The talk was well illustrated by diagrams and notes which were handed round, and by illustrated booklets on the latest multi-channel tape recorders and studios.

A few words defining the actual phenomenon of sound, frequency, rate of travel etc. started the lecture, and then a description of the ear and the effects of sound upon it.

Early recording studios left much to be desired, and little could be done to compensate for defects. (Even today it is not always possible to effect improvements without affecting the naturalness of the end result.) "Noises off" were a constant hazard, particularly as there was no immediate play-back in the days of wax discs. Hence acoustic screening, diffusion and insulation were used at an early date.

Many points of studio shape can be found simply by trial and error. Recording on site can be disastrous: that is why many films have the sound added from a proper studio afterwards.

Control rooms, especially on outside broadcasts, are often inadequate and here again unwanted noises have to be guarded against. Monitoring loudspeakers were not standardised and this led to over-compensation for some effects. The average domestic listening conditions are very different from the studio, and compensations have to be made for this. Concert halls and cinemas provide many problems. Some were fitted with absorbent seats which simulated the effect of a person if the seat were empty, and with some success. Cinema floors, walls and ceiling are not usually parallel, and this tends to cut down unwanted echoes.

Equipment is so expensive (microphones up to £500 each) that security is a major problem. The layouts of microphones, booths and screens are often charted for future reference and the various takes are numbered and logged and in some cases announced to facilitate editing before the final master-tapes are made.

Among the many charts which Barry supplied were tables giving the measured power outputs of various orchestral instruments, another giving a run-down of everyday noises from jet aircraft (deafening) to a quiet church, various oscilloscope diagrams and graphs showing overtones, harmonics and other wave forms. In all a lecture which must have taken much thought and preparation to condense so vast a subject into one evening. Many thanks, Barry, for a talk which gave us some idea of the complexities of modern recording.

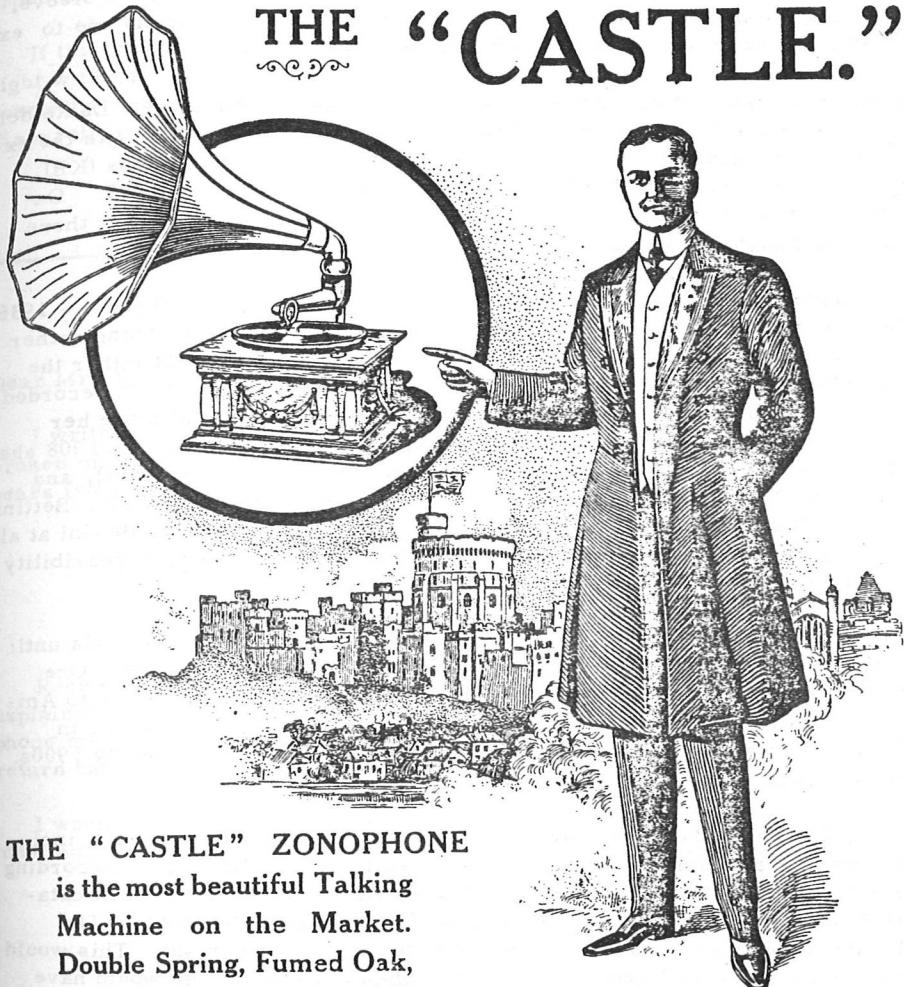
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ZONOPHONES (Pages 39 and 53): No, we have not put the same ad. in twice, just spot the difference! The WINDSOR appeared in May 1908, and the CASTLE only a month later. Why the change?

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# A Bettini Mystery

I have just been listening to the l.p. of Bettini cylinders which Geroge Frow reviewed in the April 1981 Hillandale. Eighteen cylinders are reproduced, most of them operatic. The cylinders are announced, but only the surnames of the singers are given, being prefaced by 'Madame' or 'Monsieur'. On the record sleeve, however, the Christian names are also given. The title of the l.p. leads one to expect that all, or at least most, of the cylinders date from the 1890s.

The singers identified on the sleeve are Alberto de Bassini (baritone), Dante del Papa (tenor), Rosalia Chalia (soprano) and Gina Ciaparelli (soprano). With the exception of del Papa, all appear in the singer lexicon of Kutsch and Riemens (KR). De Basini (1847 - ?) is reported by KR to have recorded for Bettini in 1895. On the l.p., he does two solo and four concerted cylinders, the latter including three with Ciaparelli and one with Chalia.

Madame Ciaparelli causes a little difficulty. Now, Gina Ciaperelli (1881 - 1936) would have been only 14 in 1895. The voice on the cylinders, besides being rather fine, appears to me to be that of an adult, so it seems pretty likely that either the Madame Ciaparelli being announced is not Gina, or the cylinders were not recorded in the 1890s. According to KR, Gina started her career in Italy, and made her first records for Columbia and Victor in 1907 (at age 26 - reasonable). In 1908 she sang for Victor under the name Gina Viafora (as mentioned by Geroge Frow), and appeared once at the Metropolitan Opera in 1910. This does not sound like a Bettini recording artist of the 1890s. KR do not mention that she recorded for Bettini at all, however. No other Ciaparelli is referred to by KR, making unlikely the possibility of Gina's mother or other relative being a singer.

In 1902, Bettini left New York to carry on his recording activities in Paris until 1908. It seems to me that the Ciaparelli cylinders date from this period. One slight difficulty concerns the cylinders she made with de Bassini. He came to America in 1892, recording for Bettini in 1895, and being made a music teacher in New York. Then he disappears from view. Did he go to Paris in the early 1900s and make his cylinders with Ciaparelli?

On this l.p., del Papa (dates unknown) appears six times with Ciaparelli, including one also with de Bassini, and one also with Chalia and de Bassini. According to the sleeve notes, at least one cylinder with Ciaparelli is listed in the 1898 catalogue as with Chalia, so del Papa was recording for Bettini in the 1890s. The Ciaparelli/del Papa cylinder would be a remake from the Paris period. This would also require del Papa to be in Paris in the 1900s, when presumably he would have made the other cylinders with Ciaparelli and de Bassini.

It seems unlikely that Chalia (1864 - 1948) also recorded for Bettini in Paris. According to KR, she was with the Mapleson Company in 1896/7 and appeared at the

Met. in 1898. She recorded for Bettini in 1896. She spent fourteen years with the Mexico City Opera (she was born and died in Cuba). Tours included Mexico, Central America and Venezuela - no mention of Paris, which, of course, she could have visited casually. After all this, I conclude that the eight Ciaparelli cylinders are indeed by Gina Ciaparelli, and date from 1902 - 1908. Del Papa and de Bassini recorded in New York in the 1890s, and also in Paris in the 1900s.

If this conclusion is correct, no less than twelve of the '1890s' cylinders (the eight with Ciaparelli and presumably the four of French 'light' music) date from the twentieth century! A bit of research in the Bettini catalogues would be useful. Does Ciaparelli appear in a Bettini catalogue prior to 1902?

George Taylor.

---

Hereford  
March 29th 1982

Dear Mr. Proudfoot,

I write in the hope that the following information will help members who have a broken mainspring to replace. I have obtained springs at intervals over several years from:

George Emmott (Pawsons) Ltd.,  
Wadsworth Mill  
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I would recommend Emmotts to any member in difficulty with mainsprings. I must add that I have no connection with them other than as a very satisfied customer.

Yours sincerely,

Laurie Wilson

---

I think that other members will have similar reports of excellent service from this firm. Of course, Barry Williamson has a good stock of springs at Phonoparts, which I feel should always be the first port of call for any member of the C. L. P. G. S.

ED

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# Record Reviews

PETER DAWSON (1882-1961); AMBASSADOR OF SONG

Ten LP Record Boxed Set published by EMI Records Australia and The National Library of Australia. Includes book giving biographical notes and full details of recordings.

This is a very handsome presentation and a worthy memorial to a great singer from his native country. I have had an opportunity of playing right through the set (one LP each night for ten nights), but as it contains about 200 titles space does not permit a detailed listing or comprehensive commentary. I propose therefore to deal with each record in general terms.

Record One This disc is made up of two-minute Edison Bell, Lambert, Colonial and White cylinders; Edison Blue Amberol four-minute cylinders; G & T, early Zonophone and Pathe discs. It is rather a pity that a Nicole disc could not have been included. His first cylinder recording, "Navajo" is included.

The transfers have, on the whole, all been very well done, but one or two of the cylinders seem to me to be played on the slow side. Towards the end of this disc and during the next two or three, one becomes conscious of a roughness in the louder notes. It is hard to tell whether this is distortion in the transfers or wear on the original records. If the latter is the case, it is a great pity, as many items on which the fault occurs are quite common and easy to find in good copies. However, I must say here and now that this is the only really serious fault I have to find with the set.

The musical content of this first disc ranges from songs sung and composed by "Hector Grant" to operatic and oratorio numbers. The most substantial number being "What have I to do with thee?" from Mendelssohn's "Elijah". This is a duet with Eleanor Jones-Hudson. It is a pity that Part One of the duet could not have been included to render it complete, but then Dawson sings only four words in Part 1.

Record Two This disc contains acoustic recordings from 1910 to 1918, including more Blue Amberol cylinders. Musically it contains many old favourites and some unfamiliar. A song recorded as Will Strong entitled "The Tanks that Broke the Ranks" has the same tune as George Formby Senior's "Father tried it on".

Record Three This contains acoustic records from 1919 to 1925. Amongst another batch of popular ballads and operatic numbers there are two rarities; an item from "Salome" by Richard Strauss which is Dawson's only recording in a language other than English. It is sung in German. The second rarity is "The moon hath raised here lamp above" in duet with Browning Mummery. This had a very short catalogue life.

Record Four This disc contains electric recordings from 1926 to 1931. All familiar stuff here. The transfers, we are told, were done by a "wet-playing" technique and somehow sound like it! Not seriously to their detriment, I might add.

Record Five This contains recordings from 1932 to 1939. Mostly ballads again and some popular songs of the 1930's. This disc contains some items accompanied on the organ by Herbert Dawson (no relation) and it struck me for the first time as to how well the two artists

go together. This disc also contains one unpublished item; "The Last Patrol" recorded in 1936.

Record Six 1940 to 1946. Here we come for the first time in Dawson's career to records made in Australia and to radio transcriptions. HMV opened a record factory in Sydney in 1925 and Columbia followed suit in 1926, but Columbia also added a recording studio to their works, and it was here that all subsequent EMI Australian recordings were made. Some of Dawson's Australian recordings were issued there as Regal-Zonophones. HMV records pressed in Australia were done by the laminated process and are therefore ideal for LP transfers. Many of these are used in the present set.

Australian recordings and radio transcriptions are of the greatest interest to UK collectors as they give us material we have never had an opportunity of hearing before. I was struck by how polished Dawson's broadcast performances were. They equal his recorded performances in nearly every case. This is not necessarily so with many artists.

Record Seven 1947 to 1958 Mostly London recordings again and some more broadcast material. In these years when Dawson was between the ages of 65 and 76 his voice was showing hardly any signs of wear and his performances were as polished as ever.

Record Eight This disc is devoted to composition by Peter Dawson - mostly under the pseudonym of J.P. McCall. We get here recordings from 1907 to 1958 recorded in London and Sydney. The last track contains three songs from a broadcast made in Adelaide on 30th April, 1958. It was recorded exactly sixty years after Dawson's first professional engagement in his home city and is the very last recording that can be heard of his voice. One can't pretend that his voice here has not been touched by age, but very little. The broadcast also contains an interview which demonstrates Dawson's warmth and charm.

Record Nine Songs of Australia and New Zealand ranging from "Christmas Eve in an Australian Miners' Camp" recorded in 1907 to "Clancy of the Overflow" recorded in 1955. The mono EP version of the latter is well-known, but here we have the stereo version for the first time. Unfortunately it is marred at the beginning by some tape "wow", but perhaps this was the only stereo tape available. This disc contains two different songs called "Song of Australia". They could not offer a greater contrast. The first by Carleton and Linger is dignified and tasteful; the second by Jackson is cheap and 'dance-bandish'. Some more unpublished items are offered here including a version of "The Wild Colonial Boy" which is rather different to the version which was popular in Ireland some years ago. A real gem at the end of this side is called "Along the Road to Gundagai".

Record Ten is labelled "The Collector's Bonus" and contains an extraordinary collection including a G & T. version of "Navajo", "Wreck of a Troopship", HMV Physical Culture Exercises, Peter's Children's and Christmas Parties, a talk on HMV Model 570 and many other things. Also a ten-minute interview for the New Zealand Broadcasting Commission recorded in late 1949.

The ten LP's contain such a variety of music, entertainment and good singing that playing them through is a delightful task rather than a listening marathon. The compilers are to be congratulated on having made such a balanced choice from what must have been

a vast source, but one feels it was a labour of love.

A final word about the book which is included. This outlines Dawson's career admirably, but I have one small complaint. Why perpetuate the story that Dawson recorded in the days when cylinders had to be made in batches by the hour? Gold moulded cylinders were well established several years before Dawson made his first commercial cylinders in 1904. I think the story started with Dawson himself in his book "Fifty Years of Song", and must be regarded as artistic licence.

The present book gives all possible details of the recordings which is all any collector could desire. Full technical details are also given of how the transfers were made and the equipment used. Many photographs are included - some familiar and some new, but the reproduction is a little disappointing.

This set certainly helps to compensate for the poor treatment Peter Dawson's centenary received in the UK. The BBC could rise to nothing more than a re-hash of a half-hour programme put out about two years ago and EMI produced nothing for the occasion.

The price may be high, but I don't think any devotee of this admirable and much loved singer, will be disappointed.

John McKeown

April 1907

THE SOUND WAVE AND TALKING MACHINE RECORD.

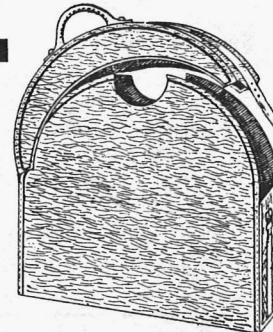
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Articles for the Hillandale News should be sent to the EDITOR at the above address. Inclusion is at the Editor's discretion. Items intended for a specific issue must reach the Editor not less than one month before the first day of the month of publication. All articles should carry the author's name (accompanying letters may be separated before the magazine is typed). Illustrations should be in the form of line drawings on plain paper, engravings or good quality photostats, or black and white photographs (not negatives or colour prints or transparencies). Material which is to be returned should be accompanied by a stamped addressed envelope of suitable size.

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